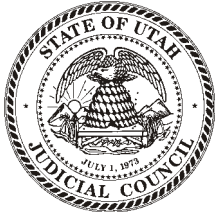


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NEWS RELEASE



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ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION OFFICE RECEIVES GRANT

Salt Lake City, Utah—The Utah State Courts' Alternative Dispute Resolution Office has received a \$56,000 grant from the Utah Board of Juvenile Justice to implement and enhance truancy mediation programs in Utah's rural districts. The Judicial Districts include first (Box Elder, Cache, Rich counties), fifth (Beaver, Iron, Washington counties), sixth (Garfield, Kane, Piute, Sanpete, Sevier, Wayne counties), seventh (Carbon, Emery, Grand, San Juan counties), and eighth (Daggett, Duchesne, Uintah counties).

The goal of the truancy mediation program is to create and implement self-sustaining programs within Utah's judicial districts. Grant monies will be used to target youth living in the rural parts of the state who are experiencing problems related to truancy and/or juvenile criminal activity. The program will recruit and train volunteers in each community to serve as mediators.

"Many of Utah's smaller communities lack the resources needed to work with at risk youth, said Kathy Elton, director of alternative dispute resolution programs. "Implementing truancy mediation—and other restorative programs in a community—better meets the needs of the youth, families, school officials, and the juvenile justice system."

Truancy mediation builds the problem-solving process around each youth. The process the youth and family engage in is designed to incorporate everyone's input. In areas where truancy mediation programs have been implemented, youth improve their school attendance without court intervention 75 percent of the time. For more information on the program or to volunteer, contact Bart MacKay at (801) 578-3974 or Kathy Elton at (801) 578-3982.

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The mission of the Utah Courts is to provide an open, fair, efficient, and independent system for the advancement of justice under the law.